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THE MYSTERY OF PEGWELL PLACE.

IN FIVE CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

IF there be an unpromising situation for prospects of adventure and unexpected incident in the wide city of London, one might safely have supposed that I had found it when I took up my abode at No. 9 Pegwell Place, on the extreme limits of Chelsea, limits so extreme that there was not even an omnibus station in the close vicinity, and all the doors had green porches. There was, indeed, an air of depressed but still resolute rurality about Pegwell Place, as though it had made up its mind not to be included in the stony-hearted town, and it stuck to its purpose with all the tenacity implied by little strips of garden, with low green palings in front, and inside the palings a goodly show of nasturtiums and scarlet-runners. Mr Coxe at the corner, indeed, had a laburnum-tree in his strip of garden, and it occasionally flowered; he had some geraniums in pots too, and a border of ground-ivy, which was very effective. But then, Mr Coxe was a Sybarite, a bachelor, and had his white muslin curtains out long before the other dwellers in Pegwell Place thought of changing their green and drab moreens. He watered his atom of a garden too with a patent machine, which possessed the peculiar property of sending a portion of the water over the wall into the adjoining lane—whence the worst language was wont to issue, in acknowledgment—and a portion into Mr Coxe's low-cut shoes. He was a prim little man, weak-eyed, very neat in his attire, and he had a delicate chest, so that the vagaries of the patent watering-engine tried him a good deal, and many times caused him to retreat with more precipitation than grace. When the water went over the wall, and the unseen aggrieved on the other side swore at the unseen aggressor, I am bound to say he never retaliated. 'Dear, dear, dear; I'm sure I'm very sorry,' in a tone which I, in the adjoining garden could hear, but which was entirely inaudible by the oburgatory individual in the lane, was the strongest form of speech I ever heard from Mr

Coxe. It certainly was a quiet spot, that tranquil little Pegwell Place, though boys whistled, and rattled at the gates, as they would have done at the railings, had there been any, and though they cut their names, and caricatures of the dwellers in Pegwell Place, upon the wooden palings, in revenge because they were wooden; and though organs ground, and dogs held counsels and fights together there. We were respectable, at Pegwell Place, and even faintly genteel. Not in the least fashionable, be it observed; we did not pretend to that, indeed we looked down upon fashion—we did not approve of it. We knew, in Pegwell Place, how wicked fashionable life was, and we preferred not to think or talk about it—such things were better passed over in silence. It was not for us to reform the world (unhappily for the world), and we did not allow it to trouble our minds.

Our respectability was of the dissenting kind—of a staid, chapel-going description. We had been singularly favoured at Pegwell Place: a little neighbourhood of the 'connection' had sprung up round us, and not one of the dwellers in the ten houses which formed the 'Place' was so benighted as to belong to a worldly and purse-proud establishment. It was quite soothing to me to look around me on the Sabbath, morning and evening, and see the same faces which I saw at the windows of Pegwell Place; it was so pleasant to think I should not have to miss them in the next world, on the never-ending Sabbath. Not that I felt so strongly, I am afraid, on this subject as Miss M'Ardle, my next-door-but-one neighbour, who was Scotch: she was in the habit of designating Pegwell Place as the Modern Land of Goshen, and regarding its inhabitants as the 'remnant.' I could not help thinking sometimes that this was 'cutting it rather fine,' as the serious butcher with whom Pegwell Place dealt would say when Miss M'Ardle required three-quarters of a pound of 'neck,' and would not have, or, at anyrate, declined to pay for the odd quarter-pound. But then, I said nothing, for did I not know that liberality is a snare, and had I not a vague idea that our intolerance, if we were intolerant, did not harm anybody! We were

peaceful people in Pegwell Place, and indeed throughout our 'connection' generally. Next to our consistency, our gentility was our strong point; and I regret to say Mr Coxe, who was not only the landlord of all the houses in Pegwell Place, but a respected member of our connection, was the first person among us to offend against both.

I really would not have believed it of Josiah Coxe, I think, on any evidence; certainly not on Miss M'Ardle's—of that I am confident; for she is really so very—but never mind—she is no longer young, and age has its failings, if she would only acknowledge it, and not persist in trying to blush, and looking down when our dear minister gets into the pulpit! As if it was seeing *her* that agitated him the other day, when he turned over the leaves of his Bible, and read out, as one verse, that David made haste and went into the house of the young lions roaring for their food. However, her silliness has nothing to do with Josiah Coxe. No, poor man, even Eliza M'Ardle cannot make out that *he* is more nervous than usual when he sees her; and as for confidence—as I said before, if she had told me he had told her in confidence, I should not have believed it; but he did not; he told *me*, he, Josiah Coxe, standing in his little garden, with his shoes as wet as it is in the nature of leather to be, with a fragile little rose-plant drowned in a puddle before him, and the patent watering-machine dribbling all over the place in a thoroughly imbecile manner—he told me, as plainly as he could for shivering all the time in his wet shoes, and wheezing in his poor weak chest.

'Miss Miller,' says Josiah Coxe, and it is impossible to tell how uncomfortable he looked when he said it, and how feeble-minded—'Miss Miller, I've let No. 8.'

'Have you indeed, Mr Coxe?' I said. I was polishing the leaves of a shiny kind of shrub, on my side of the paling—I don't know its name—but I bought it for 'hardy,' and hardy it was, and stood smoke and earwigs wonderfully. 'That's well; and I hope you have got a nice tenant, Mr Coxe, some one that we shall all be comfortable with, you know; for really, we're more like a family than a "Place," Mr Coxe, and no unpleasantness, or water-rates, or anything, and regular hours; I'm sure it's quite a blessing.'

'You're very kind to say so, Miss Miller; and really I—I think we are in a manner privileged—I really do. I—I'm rather anxious to speak to you, Miss Miller, if you could spare the time, this evening.'

'Certainly, Mr Coxe.' He had not answered my question about his new tenant, and I felt rather curious on the subject, especially as I knew no one else in Pegwell Place was aware that No. 8 had been let, and I had an excusable anxiety to learn all the particulars, for I lived at No. 9, and therefore had an especial interest in the matter. To be sure, so had No. 7, but I did not think about No. 7.

'If you will come round presently, and take a cup of tea, I shall be glad to see you, and I'll answer for my mother,' I continued, 'especially if you will bring your flute.'

Mr Coxe hesitated. Any one would have known, to look at him, that he played the flute. Being weak-eyed, timid, narrow-chested, and almost morbidly conscientious, of course he played the flute; the wailings of that melodious instrument of torture are the sole fitting utterances for such

natures. He hesitated, and allowed the patent watering-machine to drop from his hand, with a last gurgle and a final dribble; he hesitated, and glanced at his shoes, from whose tops water was surging in a dismal ooze.

'I am afraid I should keep you waiting,' he said. 'Not at all,' I replied derisively, for I don't like people who hesitate, and have no scruple about snubbing them gently. 'Change your shoes, and come in, in half an hour;' and then I went in at my own open door, leaving Mr Coxe muttering confused explanations of the extraordinary and unprecedented misconduct of the patent watering-machine.

My mother, myself, and our only servant, an excellent and conscientious but not handsome female, named Hannah, towards whom I affected manners of kindly but independent authority, and of whom I was secretly afraid, formed the little household at No. 9. My mother was a very mild, submissive old lady, who had lived through so much sorrow, that she had no more to fear now, unless, indeed, it might be my death, or marriage; but I tranquillised her somewhat whenever she dwelt on either possibility, by assuring her that though the first contingency was beyond my control, the second was not, and I undertook to answer for its never arising. 'Not if I know it, my dear mother,' I would say to her, in the popular phrase; 'and I don't suppose people can be married without knowing it, even in this advanced age.'

'But what will become of you when I am dead?' she would say. 'You know you will be very lonely, my dear.'

'Yes, I know that, mother,' I would answer; 'but I must bear it. You have borne loneliness for many years, though you had me; but I have not so much to lose as you have lost; and Hannah and I will go on living here; and Mr Coxe will look after us, and he will never want to marry us—either of us, I mean—and we shall do very well, until it is time to go to you all.'

'Well, but, Susan, suppose they pull down Pegwell Place?'

This was my mother's favourite supposition. Since we had been living at Pegwell Place, seven years now, she had never been further from her own gate than the meeting-house of our connection; but in her retirement she had heard of battles—rumours of great hotels had reached her, of Limited Liability, which she regarded as a modern edition of the Dragon of Wantley; of huge stacks of 'chambers,' combining all the expense and discomfort of hotel-life with all the responsibility and 'bother' of one's 'own mansion.' She had heard of giant squares and terraces, of Halls of Art and National Galleries, and the terrors of South Kensington loomed large before the timid soul. Wherever she heard or read of any new enterprise, tending however remotely Chelseawards, the idea immediately suggested itself: 'Susan, they will certainly pull down Pegwell Place.' She associated no distinct ideas with 'them.' She had a dread and a distrust of public authority, not unnatural to old people who have suffered a good deal, in circumstances as in other ways, and 'they' meant this intangible and undesirable thing. I generally succeeded in soothing her terrors: they had been vividly aroused only a week before, by a rumour that a Company had been formed on strictly philanthropical principles for the construction of a Turkish Bath, intended

chiefly for the delection of the lower classes. The proposed site was about a mile away from us, but for some days my mother was inconsolable.

'Don't tell me, my dear,' she said at length, quite pettishly; 'they will bring their baths and rubbish here, in the end, and we shall be turned out, to make Christians boil themselves alive like those dreadful Turks. Ah, I knew there would never be an end of their wickedness, until they pulled down Pegwell Place!'

The dear old lady loved Pegwell Place; she took the keenest interest in it, its welfare, its inhabitants, and all their belongings; and not so much as an additional flower-pot could be added to the external possessions of any house in the row, but the circumstance was communicated to her by Hannah, and immediately verified by her own observation. She had very strict ideas about the honour and dignity of Pegwell Place, and was much shocked and offended when Mr Harvey, a very deserving young married man, who was the last occupant of No. 8, had caused a neat brass-plate, announcing his occupation as a piano-tuner, to be affixed to the gate. Indeed, I think my mother's sympathy with the poor young couple, when they lost their new-born baby, was much weakened by the circumstance.

'I don't say it is wrong, Susan, my dear—certainly not; but it is in bad taste—you must see that. What would induce you, for instance, to put a brass-plate, with "Professor of Drawing," or "Drawing-lessons by the Hour," on our gate? Nothing, I am sure; and I really wonder at Mr Coxie for allowing it—that I do.'

I did not enlighten my mother as to the right and privileges of the British tenant; and I was quite amused to observe with what pleasure she received the intelligence that Mr Harvey was about to leave No. 8. She greeted him and his wife no less cheerfully at Meeting, for all the brass-plate business; but, as neighbours, it made a sensible difference.

Thus, owing to this harmless little foible of my dear mother's, the fact that No. 8 was let again assumed quite an important bearing; and I told her, with much emphasis, the news I had heard from Mr Coxie.

'Who are they, Susan? Not, not professional, I hope?'

'I hope not, mother,' I replied laughing, 'at least I hope that, if they are professional, they have a connection which will enable them to dispense with a brass-plate.—But Mr Coxie is coming to tell us, when he has changed his shoes.'

'Ah, then, he's been gardening again,' said my mother calmly. 'Poor dear man, I wonder how long he will last. With his chest, I should think another winter would see the last of him.—However, my dear, get the tea, and pray, give it him good and hot; it may do him good. I hope he rubs his feet dry before he puts on his stockings.'

By the time the tea was ready, and the tea-cakes, with which no consideration of its being June and seasonable weather, could induce my mother to dispense, were toasted, Mr Coxie arrived, very sprucely attired, and yet, I thought, not looking so happy as usual. We were quite ready to question him, he was equally willing to reply, and in a short time we had learned all he had to tell concerning the incoming tenant at No. 8. It was not much,

and it was not altogether satisfactory. The tenant was a lady—that we did not dislike; indeed, we preferred widows at Pegwell Place; as a rule, they kept early hours, and when middle-aged (and the objectionable young widow of modern society did not much frequent our neighbourhood), their visitors were ordinarily few and inoffensive. The tenant was a widow, and had one son; but the young gentleman did not reside with his mother, otherwise—and here Mr Coxie ventured on a kind of smirk, by way of implying some very subtle facetiousness—he might be a dangerous neighbour for me, and I might be a dangerous neighbour for him.

'Never mind about him and me, Mr Coxie,' said I; 'I daresay I shan't do him harm under any circumstances, and I will take care he shan't do me any.'

'No offence, Miss Miller; no offence,' said our quiet little landlord, so meekly, that I was sorry for having snubbed him; but I am of a quick temper, and the weak pleasantries of weak people try it, and that's the truth.

'And if this son does not live with his mother, who does live with her?' I asked; 'and who is she, and where does she come from?'

'No one lives with her but one female servant,' Mr Coxie, much reassured, answered. 'So far, she is like yourselves; and I have good references in this instance: she is quite respectable and genteel.'

'Does she belong to our connection?' asked my mother, in a severe tone, which implied that much depended on the answer to her question. Mr Coxie looked red and uneasy, as uneasy as if the patent watering-engine had just played him the usual trick. There was an objection, then, and we should get at it at last. I waited for him to speak; I did not help him in the least.

'Well, Mrs Miller,' he said, looking down and shuffling his feet as he spoke, 'you know I can't possibly make that a condition; indeed, if I asked any questions, they might not be taken well, so I cannot tell you. The only thing I am quite sure of, and that is something, you know, after all, under the circumstances, is, that she is not a benighted papist!'

'Not what, Mr Coxie?' said my mother, in a tone which was, for her, positively excited. "'Not a papist," and "after all," and "under the circumstances." What can you mean, Mr Coxie? Pray explain; you quite alarm me. What on earth can you have to do with papists, and how on earth could any people of the sort ever dream of coming to live in Pegwell Place?'

'They don't, my dear madam; that is just what I am telling you. Madame Bonhard is not a papist; she attends a pastor, though she is French.'

My mother was too much astonished—'upset,' she called it afterwards—to speak; so I struck in here.

'Oh, Madame Bonhard is her name, and she is a Frenchwoman. What a strange thing for a Frenchwoman to choose Pegwell Place to live in, Mr Coxie!'

'Isn't it?' he asked, assentingly, confidently. 'But she tells me she has lived for a long time in or about Chelsea, and she has a fancy for the place. She is a nice woman, I assure you, Miss Miller; and she asked so many questions about repairs, and drains, and smells, and noises, and the neighbours, and so on, I am sure she is very orderly

and particular; and as for the servant—her *bonne*, she called her—I am sure she manages everything in the house, and her mistress into the bargain; for everything she said to me, and I said to her, she turned into French, and told it to the servant; and she looked so anxious, and was so particular, as the Madame explained to me, to have everything comfortable, because she hated moving, and hoped to live here a long time: I think she has the upper hand of her mistress myself.

'And a very bad thing that is, Mr Coxe, and one nothing should ever induce me to permit; no, not in the best servant in the world,' said I, secretly wondering, as I spoke, whether I might venture to ring for Hannah just yet, and ask her to take away the tea-things, and fetch the backgammon-board. Presently I heard her coming along the passage of her own accord; so I called her, and she was quite gracious; and my mother and Mr Coxe sat down to play backgammon, and I settled myself to my drawing, and we were very comfortable.

When Mr Coxe had made the disclosure concerning his new tenant, which he had evidently dreaded, he became very chatty, and even seemed to like the subject. He was kind enough to say he hoped we would be neighbourly with the French lady, and that he had less hesitation in confiding to us the misfortune of her not being an Englishwoman born and bred, a circumstance which, he felt, needed some apology in so happily constituted a little society as that of Pegwell Place, because he knew we were less prejudiced than our neighbours against persons labouring under the misfortune of being foreigners, and because he knew we had friends in France, and I, at least, could speak French fluently. I did not know about 'fluently'; but he was right as to my speaking the French language tolerably, and right as to our having friends in France. My father had travelled much in his youth, and had retained to the time of his death many old friendships in the land of the Gaul. A few of these had descended to me, and to one in particular I was largely indebted for the modest degree of independence and comfort I had attained to for my dear mother and myself. M. de Beaucour had interested himself actively for the daughter of his dead friend, and had procured for me several pupils among the French residents of the higher class in London. He wrote to me occasionally, and his last letter had brought me the news of his appointment to a considerable post under the then newly established imperial government. He had been made *préfet* of a department, and had taken up his official residence at the seaport town of C—.

'But, Mr Coxe,' objected my mother, 'you see foreigners at a distance and foreigners next door are very different; however, I hope, for your sake, these may be nice quiet people; and I'm sure Susan will not mind doing them any little civility in her power. I am too old, you know, to be of use to any one; but so as they don't keep a parrot, and don't play the piano on Sabbath evenings, except in a psalm or a hymn, I'm sure I shan't fall out with them. But it is awkward, now, I put it to yourself, Mr Coxe—foreigners next door, and the paling only three feet high.'

Poor Mr Coxe directed an appealing gaze at me, and between us, we tried to appease my mother's apprehensions. Mr Coxe told her he would run the paling up as high as she pleased, if she deemed it advisable, on acquaintance, to be more decisively

separated from her neighbours, and made everything almost right by assuring her we were the first of his tenants whom he had informed of the coming event, and acknowledging that he did not anticipate anything unlike Christian charity from Eliza M'Ardle.

'If she scrapes acquaintance with the Madame,' said my mother, and I don't think I ever heard her say anything more true, or equally severe, 'she will lecture her to death, and then bring the minister to convert her; and if she won't be converted, Eliza M'Ardle will never rest till she hunts her out of Pegwell Place.'

When we had heard all that Mr Coxe had to tell us, and said all we had to say, concerning Madame Bonhard, the flute was introduced, and Mr Coxe played all his familiar tunes. At ten precisely, he left us, according to immemorial usage; and then it was, when I was seeing my mother to bed, that we acknowledged to one another that we did think it more than likely the 'consistency and the gentility of Pegwell Place would be compromised by these new people at No. 8.'

In a few days, the 'new people' moved in. The excitement in Pegwell Place was great, but that was natural; it was also suppressed, but that was genteel. Of course, the furniture—deposited at the gate by a huge van, and carried up the little garden by men of the preternaturally strong and abnormally dirty order, who seem to be indigenous to 'furniture-removing establishments'—was an object of lively curiosity. It was not remarkable otherwise than for its extreme cleanliness generally, and the luminous polish of every article susceptible of friction. 'Did you ever see such a parcel of French gimcrackery?' asked Eliza M'Ardle contemptuously, as two unmistakably British arm-chairs were carried into No. 8; but she is embittered by her single lot, poor thing, and I never think of minding what she says, whether about men or inanimate objects, but especially men.

We had not seen Madame Bonhard yet, but the *bonne* was in attendance while the furniture was arriving, and we had a good look at her. A faithful servant, indeed, she seemed. Had all the property been her own, she could not have kept a closer watch upon it, or been more anxious to screen it from any injury; and the charwoman employed on the occasion, a female named Corner, who was a degree less dirty and drunken than the average of her class, told Hannah that the Frenchwoman was 'uncommon hard to please' about placing this precious furniture, and it was her opinion as she had it all her own way with her misuses. The furniture was all in, and the *bonne* had installed herself for three days before Madame Bonhard arrived, which she did at length in a cab, with an immense quantity of luggage, consisting of bags, boxes, portmanteaus, and a lot of nondescript muffling. I was walking about our little garden, my mother leaning on my arm, when the cab stopped at the next gate, and I had a full view of the heaped-up luggage on the roof, and a pile of coats and cloaks on the front seat, on the top of which sat, with much gravity, a large and glossy black cat, who fell to washing his face immediately, by way of 'inaugurating' himself, on his arrival at his new home. Down the narrow walk came the *bonne*, and out of the cab stepped her mistress. It was quite exciting. The Frenchwoman, the introducer of the foreign element into Pegwell Place,

until then a very sanctuary of British faith and feeling, had arrived. My mother and I would have dearly liked to have stood still, and had a good look at the new-comer, but that would have been ungentle, and I hope no dweller in Pegwell Place would have hesitated, in our place, to sacrifice curiosity to gentility. So we had to walk slowly on, affecting to take no notice of the new arrival, but in reality noticing her very closely.

Madame Bonhard was a tall woman; very tall she might have been said to be, but she stooped forward from the shoulders, rather oddly, I thought. She was slight, and apparently very feeble, for she leaned heavily on the arm of the *bonne*, and paused once or twice in the short interval which separated the green garden-gate from the greenhouse porch. She was plainly dressed in black silk, with a long fine black shawl, which trailed negligently about her, and a large bonnet, under whose shade we could only indistinctly see a pale, worn, thoughtful face. In a few moments she had passed into the house, and the cabman having carried in the luggage with the assistance of a boy (who pulled the cat's tail as a parting attention, as he set him down by the door, and got severely scratched for his pains, as I observed with intense satisfaction), the door of No. 8 closed upon Mr Coxe's new tenants.

For many days, that door opened rarely. Mr Coxe called upon Madame Bonhard; but she was 'suffering,' the *bonne* said, and he did not see her. When he came to visit us on the evening of the same day, we asked him if he had seen Madame Bonhard's son. The question was almost superfluous, for the curiosity with which No. 8 was regarded had not yet died away, and it would have been hardly possible for the young man to have presented himself at his mother's door without being seen by some one of the other dwellers in Pegwell Place. I could undertake to answer for Eliza McArdle's having seen him if he had come within view of the 'Place,' at all events. But Mr Coxe had not seen the young man; and when, a few days later, he had an interview with his tenant, and, calling on us, told my mother and me she was a remarkably nice woman, and spoke English so well that he had no difficulty at all in keeping up a conversation with her, he mentioned that Madame Bonhard had told him her son, her Adolphe, was in France, but she expected him soon, his letters, which were frequent, invariably announcing his speedy return. On this occasion, Mr Coxe had mentioned my intention of calling on our next-door neighbours, and Madame Bonhard had received the intimation graciously, regretting that her bad health much limited her social pleasures.

When Mr Coxe went away, Hannah, who had been in and out of the room, and had heard a great portion of his discourse, took up its subject in that familiar way of hers, which I particularly disliked, but never ventured to rebuke.

'So the Madame gets a-many letters from her son, does she?' said Hannah with a shake of her head. 'I wonder how she gets 'em, for there ain't a postman gone a-nigh the place since they've bin there; and Mrs Corner, she do all the commissions, and she don't fetch and carry no letters, I know.'

'Well, it is odd, if the postman doesn't go there,' said my mother gently; 'but perhaps Madame Bonhard has her letters sent to the newspaper shops, until her friends all know her address.'

'O no; she don't have nothing of the sort,'

retorted Hannah, as quickly as if the supposition reflected grievously on her intelligence. 'Of course, I thought of that, and I asked. No letters ain't never left for her, nor yet for Bonne.' (Hannah invariably pronounced this noun-substantive as though it were a proper name.)

'Well, we shall see her son when he comes,' said I, a little impatiently, for I was tired of the subject, 'as much, or rather as little as we have seen her. And you know, mother, Mr Coxe told us Madame Bonhard's son was not to live with her.'

'And it's my belief as *that's* a story too,' again interrupted Hannah; 'a story along of a good many other things, for if he ain't to live with his mother, what does Bonne make such a fuss about his room for?'

'His room?' I asked, in much surprise.

'Yes, Miss Susan, his room. There's a reg'lar gentleman's room, Mrs Corner says, with a bath and big sponges, and a boot-rack, and a lot of coats in a press, and trousers in the chest of drawers. She see them all, though she were never in the room but once, for Bonne keeps the key; but Mrs Corner says she's for ever and ever fidgeting there herself, a cleanin' things which there ain't nobody to dirt. It ain't sensible, and no one can say as it is; but there it ain't no good looking for sense among furrineers. It never was, and it ain't likely to begin to be at this time o' day. But I can tell Mr Coxe,' said Hannah, as a climax, as she whisked the tray, which she had been carefully arranging for removal, off the table, 'there ain't no letters from her son, or no one else, as goes to Madame; and if he wants his rent reg'lar, he had better look after it, for he's got queer company in at No. 8.'

I thought over all this, as I mixed my colours and settled down to my work. I had not changed my mind about calling on Madame Bonhard, especially as Eliza McArdle was going to call, and I did not choose the French lady to adopt her version of Pegwell Place; still, though I had never yet spoken a word to them, I began to think, with Hannah, that Mr Coxe had got queer company at No. 8.

IMPEACHMENT.

THE impeachment of President Johnson has turned public attention here and elsewhere to the characteristics of that decisive political step. Impeachments are happily so rare now a days that people are ignorant of the meaning and force of them. Indeed, as regards rulers, they are somewhat antiquated, the more modern substitute, revolution, having supplanted them. In most continental states—certainly in Asiatic states—if a ruler misbehaves himself, the people do not trouble themselves with the form and ceremonial of accusation and trial, but, rising in rebellion, they put the issue between them and their head to the arbitrament of the sword. Only in countries where there is a constitutional government with representative assemblies, is an impeachment, whether of ruler or any one else, possible, and even then, the possession of these institutions does not necessarily give a title to that other, which must depend either upon a statutory origin or upon traditional practice.

In America, the right of impeachment exists by virtue of the constitution itself; but originally, it is derived from the right as it existed and still exists in England; and the method by which the right is asserted is essentially the same as the

English method, so that the remarks which are applicable to the one are equally applicable to the other.

Of course, in a country where republican institutions prevail, the questions as to trial of accused persons before their peers do not enter, as they do in England, for, excepting alone the criminal and the insane classes, every man in such a country is the political equal of every other man. Nevertheless, there is, in the American procedure on impeachments, an analogy to our own, in which even this principle is involved, at the point where it becomes a question what persons or what body of persons have the right to impeach, and what persons have the right to try the impeachment.

According to English law, an impeachment means an accusation of any one, peer or commoner, by the House of Commons, which has the sole right to impeach, as the House of Lords has the sole right to try the impeachment. In America, the House of Representatives has the sole right to accuse, and the Senate the sole right to try. In either case, it is considered beneath the dignity of the representatives of the people to appear before any court but the highest; and in England, the House of Lords—from which, theoretically, all other courts in the kingdom derive their origin, and to which final appeals lie from all but the criminal courts—answers to that description. Those persons, therefore, whom the Commons of the realm, speaking by the voice of their representatives in parliament, single out as fit subjects for animadversion and for public trial, are brought to the bar of the House of Lords, which, for the purpose of trying the impeachment, is erected into a court of criminal procedure. In America, the Senate is not a court of justice at all for any other purpose than that of trying impeachments; and it is now, for the first time, called upon to exercise its jurisdiction in the case of Mr Andrew Johnson. The American Senate does not entertain appeals from any courts either of law or equity; it has no historical claim to original jurisdiction, as the English House of Lords has; does not even claim, as that assembly does, the exclusive right to try its own members when charged with felony. But on impeachments, it acts as a sort of grand jury, except that its finding is conclusive, supposing the court to be properly constituted. In England, the proper constitution of the House of Lords is attained when all the peers who have a right to sit and vote have been duly summoned, and the Lord High Steward, who is not necessarily the Lord Chancellor, has been appointed. After the trial, the youngest baron is first called upon for his vote, and the other lords give their votes according to seniority—going, like Hamlet's crab, backwards, till the Lord High Steward is reached. A majority, even of one, decides the verdict, which is given by the peers unsworn, upon their honour; in the Senate, a majority of two-thirds of the states' members is required before sentence can be pronounced. It remains to be seen how far the existing American Senate will be deemed to have jurisdiction in the present case, seeing that representatives of the Southern States are for the moment excluded; and this all-important question must be decided, not, as in England, by the House of Lords, which is sole judge of its own rights, privileges, and authority, but by the supreme court of the United States, which, for all matters of law and questions connected therewith, is superior to the legislature itself.

The Great Charter of English liberties, granted by King John, provided that no free man should be seized or imprisoned, or in any way molested, sentenced, passed upon, or destroyed, '*except by the judgment of his peers, or the law of the land.*' How, then, can a commoner be made, under any circumstances, to plead before the House of Lords? This very natural question may be answered by explaining that the above-mentioned chapter of Magna Charta related only to indictments, or actions brought at the instance of the crown. Before that law was made, it was not unfrequent for men in a subordinate position in life to be called in question before the royal council, or even before the king himself, for acts which it was the supposed duty or interest of the crown to punish. He was sentenced by a court, the members of which had no sympathy with him, who might reasonably be supposed to enter on the trial with a certain amount of prejudice against him, or, at all events, to be more indifferent about securing him justice, than they would have been about one of their own class. And the question had a bearing upward as well as downward. In those times, a peer accused of crime was not likely to get a thoroughly fair trial at the hands of men embittered against him, as one of a class which despised them and dragged them before the judgment-seat; men who, whether with reason or without, were at constant issue with the class called 'noble.' It was therefore highly important that some means should be taken to prevent in both cases a miscarriage of justice, and the 'free-man' clause in Magna Charta secured those means, and has remained ever since a bar to undue influence on the part of the crown, so far as that affected the constitution of the courts of justice.

But it is very evident that a process of law not in existence at the time Magna Charta was framed, could not have been contemplated by the framers as coming within the statute. The object of the framers was to secure all men, peers or commoners, from trial by a court chosen at the discretion or caprice of the crown, and under its influence. It could not have been wished to guard against the possibility of injustice at the hands of a body not in existence, and the House of Commons did not exist till fifty years after Magna Charta was signed. The principle, therefore, of the 'free-man' clause does not apply to impeachments, and as it is reasonably asserted to be beneath the dignity of the House of Commons to sue in any but the highest court, so it may reasonably be said that a man, peer or commoner, stands in no danger of unfair trial, though the triers be not his peers, under the exceptional and peculiar circumstances under which an impeachment is made. The proceedings must necessarily be conducted under the eye of the public, and be open to public criticism, and, if need be, to public interference; but apart from this, the proceedings are originated and carried on by accusers who cannot, from their position, number, and diversity of opinions, be open to the charge of personal motive, and the triers are men who, for the same reasons, could not be open to the charge of partiality or corruption.

The question, however, was very early raised by the Lords in the case of Sir Simon de Bereford, who was accused to the Upper House of having participated in the treason of Roger Mortimer. The House entertained the accusation, because they said it was matter of notoriety that Sir Simon had actually done the acts of which he was accused;

but 'they came before the king in parliament, and said, all with one voice, that the said Simon de Bereford was not their peer, and therefore they were not bound to judge him as a peer of the land;' still, for the reasons above mentioned, 'they, as peers and judges of parliament, by assent of the king, do award and judge him as a traitor and enemy to the king and realm, to be drawn and quartered.' It should be observed here, in explanation of this protest, that Sir Simon de Bereford was not, properly speaking, impeached, but was brought to the Lords' notice at the instance of the king himself, though the Commons were only too glad to have the man punished. X

The first case of impeachment in English history occurred in the last year of Edward III.'s reign. For at least fifteen years, the Commons had borne it ill that not only should they be obliged to contribute excessively towards the expensive wars of the king, undertaken on his own responsibility, often out of caprice, but that they should also have to build up the fortunes of farmers of the revenue, men who discounted the grants made to the king in parliament, and then exacted the uttermost farthing from the people on whom the tax was levied. The price these men paid the king was all insufficient for his purpose, and he had to come again to his 'faithful Commons' for a supply long before the amount last granted should have been expended. The people did not so much mind paying for the wars, which brought honour and prestige, though small profit, to the country, but they were naturally annoyed at seeing so large a percentage of their gifts flowing into private channels; channels, too, through which power often came to their own disadvantage and oppression. Other causes helped to make the people discontented: there had come a reaction from the glories of the earlier part of the reign; the sea-coasts were insulted by cruisers, which, when King Edward was in his prime, had better have been stranded at home than shew their flag in English waters; the condition of the people, from various causes, from ruinous wars, from the Black Death, from scarcity, and from the decline of trade, had become deplorable, and the representatives of the people began to murmur. The king was old and too much worn out to crush the spirit of the Commons, who had been steadily advancing in power for many years past; and so it happened that, in 1376, the House of Commons, in the name of all the people of England, accused the farmers of revenue and some of the king's ministers of high crimes and misdemeanours; and they told the king that if he had 'always possessed about him faithful counsellors and good officers, he would have been so rich that he would have had no need of charging his Commons with subsidy or tallage, considering the great ransoms of the French and Scotch kings, and of so many other prisoners; and that it appeared to be for the private advantage of some near the king, and of others by their collusion, that the king and kingdom are so impoverished, and the Commons so ruined.' Upon Lord Latimer, Lord Nevill, and four merchants, commoners, they demanded speedy justice; and the accused were in the end displaced, fined, and otherwise punished.

Twelve years later, Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, and Chancellor to Richard II., was impeached by the Commons for malversation in his office, for farming the public revenue dishonestly, for selling pardons, and for having neglected

to relieve the city of Ghent, whereby it was captured. He was disgraced, and imprisoned, and all his estates were confiscated, though they were afterwards restored to his heirs. At the same time, Sir Robert Tresilian, Chief-justice of England; Sir Simon Burley, the intimate friend of the late king; and Sir Nicholas Brembre, 'some time Mayor of London,' were impeached and executed on a charge of having advised the king (Richard) to act illegally. The Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Chichester were impeached at the same time; but their lives were spared on account of their profession, and they were only fined and banished into Ireland.

'Impeachment had lain still, like a sword in the scabbard, since the accession of Henry IV.' says Mr Hallam, till 1449, when the Commons presented a bill to the Lords containing charges of treason against William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, in that he had brought dishonour on the king and kingdom by his misconduct in France when sent thither on negotiations. The king anticipated the trial by a sentence of banishment, whereupon the peers protested, declaring that the duke might have demanded a trial by his equals.

From this time till that of James I., the House of Commons refrained from exercising its undoubted right to impeach bad ministers; but in James's reign, those men who thought the privilege was dead, were disagreeably surprised to find it had only slept. Sir Giles Monpesson and Sir John Michel, to whom had been granted the monopoly of selling certain things, pursued their extravagant rights so dishonestly and so insolently as to rouse the anger of the public, and awake the dormant power of impeachment. They were impeached by the House of Commons, found guilty, and heavily fined. Soon afterwards, Sir J. Bennet, judge of the Prerogative Court, was impeached for corruption, and the Bishop of Llandaff for bribery; but the great objects upon whom the sword of impeachment was at this time turned were Lord Chancellor Bacon and the Earl of Middlesex. The case of Lord Bacon is well known—how he was impeached of bribery and corruption in his office of Chancellor; how he confessed his guilt, was sentenced to pay a fine of £40,000, to be imprisoned during the king's pleasure; was declared incapable of again holding office, and forbidden to come within the verge of the court. The impeachment of Lord Middlesex, Treasurer of England, for bribery and other misdemeanours, took place in the parliament of 1624. The earl was unanimously convicted by his peers, on four out of six charges, was sentenced to pay £50,000, to be imprisoned during pleasure, and to be excluded for ever from his seat in parliament.

In the next reign, the Duke of Buckingham, who, in spite of the king's warning, that 'he would have his fill of parliamentary impeachment,' had instigated the proceedings against Lord Middlesex, was himself impeached. Charles, however, stood by him in a way he would have done well to copy afterwards in the case of the Earl of Strafford, and Felton's knife had its effect before the anger of the Commons could overtake its object. Impeachments followed thick and fast in the later years of this reign, the most notable among them being those of the Earl of Strafford, Archbishop Laud, Lord-keeper Finch, and Heath, the Attorney-general. The last was impeached for the part he had taken in the proceedings against the five members and Lord Kimbolton in 1642. There was nothing in

these cases to distinguish them from the general run of impeachments, unless the nature of some of the charges—for example, 'of introducing absolutism,' and the vote of the Commons in the Duke of Buckingham's case, 'that common fame is a good ground of proceeding either by inquiry or presenting the complaint to the king or lords'—might be considered to do so.

Early in the next reign came the impeachment of Lord Clarendon, for that, among other things, he 'hath designed a standing army to be raised, and to govern the kingdom thereby; and advised the king to dissolve this present parliament, to lay aside all thoughts of parliament for the future, to govern by a military power, and to maintain the same by free quarter and contribution.'

The point, whether an impeachment is put an end to by a dissolution (which arose on the case of the Earl of Danby in Charles II.'s reign) was debated with much energy on several occasions, until 1791, when it was decided by both Houses, on the impeachment of Mr Warren Hastings, that impeachments do not abate by a dissolution, but continue from parliament to parliament, though there may not be in the second a single member who sat in the first. In 1717, on the impeachment of the Earl of Oxford, the smaller proposition was agreed to, that a prorogation does not affect an impeachment. The question of pleading the royal pardon in bar of an impeachment was not settled in Danby's case, to which continual dissolutions, with long intervals of summonses, put an end. By a clause in the Act of Settlement, however, it is provided that no pardon under the Great Seal of England be pleadable to an impeachment of the Commons in parliament. This law, however, does not take away the power of the king, who is the fountain of mercy, to pardon after trial and conviction, whether the proceedings be by impeachment or by the usual channel.

The trial of Warren Hastings for his conduct in India is the most remarkable of modern impeachments. It was conducted with consummate ability in its first stages by the foremost men of the day, and with a vehemence on the part of some, including Edmund Burke, that drew forth—from Warren Hastings, it is said—the famous epigram, which was handed to Burke after he had spoken eloquently and bitterly against the accused in Westminster Hall:

Of't have I wondered that on Irish ground
No poisonous reptile ever yet was found;
Nature, though slow, will yet complete her work—
She saved her venom to create a Burke.

This case occupied the House of Lords for a period extending over three years, and then perished of inanition, without any finding being come to.

A CHANGE OF LUCK.

CHAPTER XXIII.—MR TREVETHEK AT MRS LEIGHTON'S COTTAGE.

'MAD! Why do you say so? I am not mad. That was his excuse, for if I talk quickly, I can check it;' and Mrs Leighton, who had hastily turned about, put her arms close by her side, standing fixed as a statue, with a half-scared and pitifully entreating look suddenly come upon her white face. 'Joe says I am not mad. I talk slowly now.'

'You mistook what Mr Trevethek said,' stammered Adams. The secretary, wonderful to say,

was ushering the little lawyer into Mrs Leighton's cottage, shortly after dusk on the day to which the last chapter refers.

'I will only ask you one or two questions,' said Mr Trevethek, much embarrassed. They had come upon Mrs Leighton in the front room, where she was talking with Joe, who, as usual, was busy among his birds; and on Adams introducing the lawyer (whose visit, however, she was expecting), she had instantly become so excited, and spoken so unintelligibly, that Mr Trevethek, when she whirled round to pass into the other room, impulsively whispered to Adams that she was mad, a remark which reached her preternaturally sharpened ear, producing the effect we have seen.—'You are an artist!' exclaimed the lawyer, in fresh surprise, staring at the portraits on the wall, as they together entered the second apartment of the cottage. 'All one face—how is that?'

'What is it you have to ask me?' she impatiently inquired, speaking evidently with forced slowness. 'You know who I am; you know my plans; what,' and she turned her flashing eyes towards Adams, 'what is it he does not know?' Oh, all will yet be lost! and her hands went up.

'Mr Trevethek will help you, I am sure,' replied Adams, with most unusual submissiveness, glancing appealingly to the lawyer.

'Where were you married?' sternly demanded Mr Trevethek, fixing her with his keen glance.

'At Modbury;' and she lowered her arms again to her side, as a child might do when answering questions.

'On what date?'

With a quick movement, Mrs Leighton produced a small case from her bosom, and opening its clasp with a snap, selected a paper which she handed to him.

'Ah, the certificate! But it is in Latin; that isn't usual. But I suppose it was his doing, to bother common people.—That is no forged signature,' he went on muttering, as he turned the document about, reading and surveying it. 'Date, July 5, 1819, and Sir Arthur's will was executed October 17, 1820. It all tallies.'

'Are you satisfied?' she asked, with a mixed air of triumph and impatience.

'Whew!' whistled Mr Trevethek, dropping the paper on the table; and then, raising his eyebrows, he compressed his lips. 'Who were you before the marriage?' he added. 'I mean, what was your parents' position?'

'It matters nothing,' she replied, with a little hesitation, the dialect always present in her speech becoming, for some reason, much broader. 'He then thought me good enough.'

'You would be poor, I conclude—compared with him?'

'I was the daughter of the landlord where he came ashore to lodge,' she answered, standing at bay.

'Yes, where he lodged. Don't be offended; you would have to answer all these questions in making out your claim.' She offered no comment, but beat with her fingers on the rustic table, where she had rested one hand. 'How was it you consented to keep the marriage secret? Why did you not follow him before this?'

'Why! It was not my doings.' Her manner suddenly changed. Approaching Mr Trevethek, she, with a quick gesture, motioned him to a chair, but herself remained standing; and then, speaking

with great vivacity, she went on: 'I do not know you, but he brings you,' indicating Adams, whose frightened look shewed he was unaccountably ill at ease, 'and I will tell you all. He came to the bay in somebody's yacht, but hurt his leg badly, and landed to have a doctor. He'—All at once the speaker's words became utterly unintelligible; she continued to pour sounds forth, and commenced waving her hands wildly. Adams put his finger on her arm, and she turned to him with a start; then a shamefaced expression flashed across her worn features, as she seemed to make an effort at recollection. After a pause, she recovered the clue. 'I had to nurse him, and he stayed on with us. He was bold and gay, and spent money with the fishermen.—There is the jewellery he gave me,' lifting a hand to the small box on the shelf. 'I was urged to it by my parents, at least my father, who was dazzled by the sight of the gold; and at last I said "Yes." A shiver shook her, and, by a quick movement, she turned partially away.

'Did you then know who he was?' asked Mr Trevethek in the pause.

'I knew he was rich, and some day would be richer,' she said bitterly, her face coming back with a fiercer look upon it. 'That was why our marriage was to be kept secret till some one died.'

'His uncle, Sir Arthur.'

'Arthur! Yes, I knew the name the day he came into my room with the letter;' and she paused to laugh, in her startling way, at the same time wringing her hands together. Abruptly changing her tone, she added: 'He had foam upon his lips, and raged so that I nearly dropped my child.'

'Your child—what became of it?' eagerly inquired the lawyer.

'See, where he smiles upon me!' and she lifted her hands to the faces looking from the wall. 'But do not interrupt me; I am soon confused,' drawing her fingers across her forehead. 'He threw a letter into my lap. It was from that uncle; and why did he say a nephew—he was not a son—should not have a wife? Some traveller had told it, for the servants would talk.' After a further pause of a second or two, she proceeded: 'That letter said he should be disinherited, and so I must be cursed! He said I was his ruin: he spat at my child! Oh, do not smile, sweet faces!' Much excited, she whirled her arms towards the portraits: 'He spat upon you!'

'It was most rascally; but be calm,' put in Mr Trevethek, alarmed by this passionate apostrophe.

'He told my father he was beggared through me, and, if so, he would go away to the world's end, and leave me and the child, who had done it all! Now, do you understand it? It was their settlement. My child was taken from me in my sleep, which was their bargain. He was my father, and I must not curse him: both he and my mother soon went. When it was light, the babe's bed was empty; there were the hollows his little limbs had made, but he was gone! Ay, gone—gone!' she repeated, in hollow tones. 'In two weeks, a certificate was shewn me of my sweet baby's death, far off in a French town, where he had taken it.—It was a lie!' she cried, solemnly raising an appealing hand; 'the child was murdered!' Fever, it said. Ah, I know! So the child went among the Blessed Ones before he had learned to know me; but I shall know him. If they grow there, he is now as this;' and she rushed across to the

most mature of the heads upon the wall, first bowing before it, and then reaching up to kiss it. 'I shall go on painting him each year, that I may know him, and claim him when I die!' Uttering a long, low wail of anguish, she again pressed her lips to the picture; then, covering her face with her hands, she suddenly crouched down upon the floor, close by the wall, and remained there, silent.

Poor, puzzled Mr Trevethek rose from his chair, advancing towards her, Adams having already gone to her side: at almost the first touch from the latter, she uplifted herself, but she had to steady herself by the wall, and her eyes wandered vacantly. The lawyer dashed something bright away from his eyes, then pulled out his pocket-handkerchief, and made a great noise, flapping it about before using it. 'I understand it all now,' he said. 'After that you were put in confinement.'

'I was not mad,' she hastened to say, concentrating her burning vision on him. 'Nor was Joe mad,' and she glanced towards the inner door, outside of which her curious associate had been bidden by Adams to remain.—'It is eight months since I and Joe stole away together in the night, and Cousin Polfer gave the doctor money for Joe's birds; we couldn't take them with us, as well as these,' pointing to the paintings.

'The doctor would keep the place?' interposed Mr Trevethek. 'Would he not inform Sir Mark of your escape?'

'No, no. Polfer settled all. He told the doctor he would be blamed, and would have the money stopped.' She said this very impatiently, as if wearied of the details. 'Polfer gives me money. He said I ought to come here, and make him pay him back enough for all of us. But it was not for money I came. I'—

'You must not go into the other part,' interrupted Mr Trevethek. 'I don't wonder at your wishing to punish him; but I am a lawyer, and bigamy is a serious matter. I needn't know anything about your plans; I won't know anything. It isn't for me to interfere on his behalf in any way. How were we treated this morning?'

'But you will keep back the letter?' entreatingly inquired Adams, breaking his long silence. 'You see that all I told you is true.' Before the lawyer could answer, Mrs Leighton, her head erect and eyes flashing, put out an arm between them.

'I lived first in the town, and there I saw him, but he did not know me,' she commenced in a sing-song key. 'Then we ventured here, where I am at his elbow; and I see him in the fields, we pass on the road, and I have been in his house, and he does not know me! But he shall do so! The servants will announce me through the shining doors flung open, and bow to me as I enter! Sinking into a courtesy on the floor, her pale features were distorted, as she again laughed loudly, and made her fingers give a crackling noise as she strangely twisted them. Abruptly checking herself, she added, with a fierce look: 'Why do you not use my title? Who do you say I am?'

'You are undoubtedly Lady Dayton,' answered the astonished lawyer, pointing to the marriage certificate upon the table. She seemed to have fascinated the little gentleman, who was wonderfully mild and calm; and she appeared to perceive it, for her own manner grew more decided.

'Give me, then, the letter he speaks of,' she said,

nodding towards Adams, and holding out her own hand imperatively.

'I cannot do that,' Mr Trevethke said, rather hesitatingly—she had nearly overmastered him—'but I will keep it back till process has issued. They shall not get into intercourse, and compromise the matter, if he were ten Stephen Daytons. I say Sir Arthur's wishes shall be carried out.'

'I do not understand why he is to lose his property,' she suddenly exclaimed, with a puzzled look. 'He shall not be meddled with! The threads did cut;' and hurriedly crossing the room, she snatched the covering from her imitation embroidery-frame.

'You mean the Thread-cutting,' said Mr Trevethke, fresh astonishment on his face at sight of this new object. 'But that is a mistake; it doesn't affect the tenure at all. It is an old custom, but it wouldn't touch the property if all the threads missed.'

'What!' and she started.—'When this thread,' pointing to a solitary silk strand stretched across the frame, 'the night before last would not cut, did it not mean his luck, which they say is so good, changed?'

'Do not be superstitious,' smiled the lawyer.

'Was all my labour wasted? Who told me the lie?' she exclaimed, her eyes flashing.

Turning to the frame, she wildly snapped the thread, and then seizing the wooden square with both hands, tossed it bodily over upon the hearth. There she trod upon it in a perfect transport of fury. Joe, aroused by the crash, could no longer obey Adams's order, but put his head within the door; and when he saw his mistress so using the hitherto superstitiously treasured article, his wonder nearly equalled that of Mr Trevethke. Making his curious whining noise, he crept forward, and took hold of Mrs Leighton's dress.

'I shall keep back the letter,' murmured Mr Trevethke, in tones not very unlike those of alarm, laying his hand on Adams's arm. Then, unnoticed by Mrs Leighton, who seemed to be exhausted by the force of her own passion, and now stood panting among the ruins she had made, the lawyer passed through the inner door into the first room, where Joe's birds, excited by the noise, were uproariously singing, and so out of the cottage.

The visit of Mr Trevethke to Mrs Leighton's dwelling may be explained in very few words, and the explanation will account for the wonderfully altered demeanour of the secretary. Adams had outwitted himself, and given Mr Trevethke a power over him. Having identified the men who took away the curiously disclosed box from the quarry as those he had met there on the prior night, and picked up that they were residing at the principal hotel in the adjoining town, he so excited himself that he recklessly determined to know the worst. His first impression was that Mr Trevethke and his companion, who Walter Dayton said had their 'family face,' were working in conjunction with Walter's mother, though it sadly puzzled him to imagine how they had learned anything of his inquiries respecting Sir Mark and letters from Cornwall. It was, however, clear to him that these were other searchers on the baronet's track, and that they knew something of his own doings in that direction. Without making any communication to Mrs Leighton, he left the cottage, and went over to the neighbouring town; there he called at the hotel, and, as the first result of his

inquiries, got an introduction by one of the waiters to Stubbs. The clerk, of course, knew him again as the person he overheard talking in the street with the man from the post-office, and he made an excuse for absenting himself for a moment, quickly returning with Mr Trevethke.

We need not give the full particulars. Clever as Adams was, he was no match for the trained and experienced lawyer; and, in the end, he had to divulge to him Mrs Leighton's secret, with the sole exception, that, though he admitted Sir Mark's wife to be in the vicinity, he would not say precisely where she was. Mr Trevethke had already heard the floating rumour connecting the name of the baronet with that of the beauty who officiated at the last Thread-cutting, and when he fairly comprehended the new danger threatening Sir Mark, Adams did not much surpass him in excitement. He rather abruptly dismissed the baffled and disheartened secretary, and hurried to Mr Stephen with this news. It startled him as much as the lawyer could possibly have wished, but it did not in other ways affect him exactly as Mr Trevethke desired. The latter urged it as a reason why the legal proceedings for the establishment of Sir Arthur's will should be hurried on, for the purpose of distracting Sir Mark from this folly; but Stephen Dayton, to the lawyer's chagrin, insisted upon the more direct step of seeing his cousin at once, and warning him of the danger hanging over himself, and the scandal impending on the family name. Thus it happened that the two came to present themselves at the Lodge on the following morning, when Sir Mark's impetuous passion prevented his relative's intentions. But on Stephen Dayton's return to the hotel, he reawakened all Mr Trevethke's apprehensions by determining to write to Sir Mark, communicating Adams's disclosures. He did so, and the letter was despatched by special messenger; Mr Trevethke, however, contrived to intercept it, saving the matter to his own conscience by arguing to himself that Stephen was his client, and he, as his adviser, had a discretionary right in the matter. If the letter were delayed reaching Sir Mark until the suit for the recovery of the estate had gone too far for compromise, it would still, he assured himself, be quite in time to have its effect in the other affair. The pressing thing, in Mr Trevethke's eyes, was to keep the two cousins, for the present, asunder. But he did make a use of this letter. Adams again appeared at the hotel on the following morning, and the lawyer, stating the step that his client had taken, artfully hinted that the only condition upon which he could delay the letter in reaching its destination, was an interview for his own satisfaction with Mrs Leighton. Adams had no alternative but to accept the terms. He went back to the cottage, and by a series of the most skilful lies he could concoct, persuaded and frightened Mrs Leighton into consenting to see the lawyer. Finally, the interview took place in the manner and with the results we have seen.

But Adams's trouble in this matter was not yet ended. As soon as Mrs Leighton had recovered from the exciting exhaustion of destroying the embroidery-frame sufficiently to observe that Mr Trevethke had departed, a fresh passion seized her. How had he learned her secret, she afresh demanded—Adams's previous explanations, it was clear, had not satisfied her. Adams, having got Joe out of the inner room, in his desperation, made an

incredible suggestion: he said Joe must have been tampered with, consciously or not. Mrs Leighton, at first, repelled the notion with scorn. Adams reminded her how Joe, in his own wilfulness, attacked Sir Mark in the conservatory; might he not be secretly interfering again? The poor lady's impaired wits were staggered. Joe was summoned, and she questioned him fiercely; he was further perplexed by interpolations from Adams; and, as a consequence, he gave confused and inconsistent replies. In a wild storm of passion, she poured a torrent of execration on poor Joe, uttered in their own broad dialect, and then, throwing money to him, she ordered him to quit the cottage and return to Cornwall. It was in vain the amazed Joe clung to her dress, it was all useless that he whined like a beaten hound; she even struck him with clenched hands, and tearing herself away, cursed him. During that night, he crouched somewhere in the front apartment amid his birds, but in the morning, his mistress's rage was increased rather than abated. With frenzied emphasis, she insisted upon his instant departure; nothing would satisfy her but the disappearance of his familiar face; and the more fiercely she stormed at Joe, the more she now fawned upon Adams.

'It is him who has me sent away!' yelled Joe, making a dash towards Adams, but he checked himself. 'I would kill him, if he hadn't got your eyes,' hissed Joe, spitting at the secretary.

Mrs Leighton and Adams stared at each other, and the eyes which had so often looked curiously at one another, for the first time seemed to be conscious of how like they were. For a moment, the strife was suspended, but then Mrs Leighton glanced away from Adams to the far other kind of face upon the wall, and all her fury returned.

'Go to Polfer; he will see to you,' she cried, hunting Joe towards the door.

'I will not—I will die first,' the poor fellow answered; but he yielded when she wildly rushed to the bird-cages, on the whispered suggestion of Adams, and opened their doors. Lifting down a large cage, he began to talk to the birds in their own chirping language; and, at some signal from him, all the canaries gathered into that cage, which, by a leather fastening attached to it, he then threw over his shoulder. Going to the casement, he opened it; and the linnets and finches, upon his waving his arms, flew through the aperture, screaming with delight. Then Joe turned and drooped appealingly before his mistress; but she again poured forth a stream of imprecations, among which the command that he should go to Polfer's was distinguishable. Uttering a cry like that of a brute creature, Joe, with the cage upon his back, bounded through the door, and was gone.

Ruin had come upon the cottage early and suddenly. The embroidery-frame lay shivered within the inner room; while all the cages in the other apartment were empty, and poor Joe was no longer there. Mrs Leighton stood pallid and agitated amid the wreck, with the now triumphant Adams smiling at her side, and again the eyes so wonderfully like, looked inquiringly into each other's depths.

CHAPTER XXIV.—THE MARRIAGE.

Sir Mark Dayton was a doomed man; but the change of his luck involved no superstitious explanation. His energy had utterly broken down, and he remained inactive, crushed, and fascinated,

while circumstances swept on. A single resolute effort in the following up of the hint given in Walter Dayton's mother's note would have saved him from at least one, and that the more disastrous, of two pending catastrophes. But he did not make it. After his return from trying the secretary's door, he did not again stir his little finger to save himself. Once or twice he indirectly inquired of those in attendance whether Adams had returned to the Lodge. The answers he got were in the negative; and, instead of tracing him, and going down into the village and elucidating the mystery of the woman who had been seen about the Lodge, he shrank from the inquisitive glances of the whispering servants, and hid closely in his own room. Mr Bilk, the lawyer, in pursuance of an exclamation from Sir Mark during his interview with his cousin, had been sent for, but the baronet refused to see him, and persisted in that resolve, though the attorney, who had seen the account in the local paper of the finding of the box at the quarry, was urgent in his request. In the meantime, the trains of circumstances Sir Mark had set moving before he received the stunning blow of the communication he got through Walter, progressively developed themselves, enwrapping him in their meshes. A reply came from Leicestershire, in answer to his message, apprising him that Lucy and her mother had complied with his desire, and had at once set out on their return; and the Rev. Mr Winnicomb, after the shortest possible interval, duly presented himself again, bearing the fatal licence of marriage. All that Sir Mark did was to instruct that preparations should be made for his departure from the Lodge for Yorkshire on the Saturday!

Both Lucy and her mother were puzzled by the hasty message from Sir Mark, but it was not for them, at that moment, to inquire too closely; and Mrs Eddowes, during the rapid journey back, impressed unceasingly upon her daughter, that the hurry was a most practical compliment paid her by the baronet, since it shewed how greatly he missed her company. Upon their arrival at Elm Cottage, they were much surprised by the report of Aunt Dunstan, that no open preparations were being made for the occasion. Lucy, on the instant, petulantly asserted that she would not dispense with all public display at her wedding. No carriage even had been sent down to the cottage; and embarrassed Mrs Dunstan had to go up to the Lodge to intimate the arrival of the bride-elect. She was much surprised at the alteration in Sir Mark's appearance; nor in his appearance only, for his manner was exceedingly strange. He seemed much excited by the information that Lucy was near him, and in a curious fluttering kind of way, repeated again and again that the marriage should go on, but that he could not bear the excitement of any show in connection with it. Would Lucy, he begged, come up to him at once? Then, he should be happy. His speech and manner wholly surprised Mrs Dunstan; they were so different from what was customary with him. Mrs Dunstan hurried back to the cottage, and, after making her report as to Sir Mark, she added that the servants, somehow, looked excited and unsettled, and that everything at the Lodge seemed disordered. Aunt Milly argued that it was all quite right; no doubt the household was aware of what was about to happen. A carriage quickly followed Mrs Dunstan down to the village, and it bore away the still half-

discontented beauty and her exulting mother to the Lodge. They both, like Mrs Dunstan, were surprised by the changed look of the baronet, and at an indescribable difference apparent in everything around. But Sir Mark's spirits were most unusually high; he almost oppressed Lucy with his eager greeting and the emphasis of his attentions; and his tongue was hardly silent for a minute. Lucy, in the conversation, raised some objections, but they were instantly smoothed down by private whispers from her mother, who, under the roof of that grand house, and in the presence of her titled future son-in-law, was willing to acquiesce in anything which would secure and hasten Lucy's marriage.

Eventually, it was arranged that the ceremony should take place on the following morning, the baronet making it clearly understood, that, immediately after luncheon at the Lodge, himself and Lucy should set out for his seat in Yorkshire, there to spend a few weeks! So it was settled. Both Lucy and her mother were themselves too excited to dwell overmuch on the strangeness of the baronet's manner, or on the unusual demeanour of the wondering servants. There were wild dreams at Elm Cottage during that long night—dreams, alas, fated to be most rudely broken; and there was great bustle of preparation there early on the following morning.

How it had got into circulation in the village was a mystery. Lucy's return, of course, was known, and perhaps the Lodge carriage, so early at the door of Elm Cottage, might have set some of the gossips wondering; or some whispers might have reached the village from the Lodge, as was not unlikely; or the humbler officials at the church might have had suspicions excited by the slight preparations there, and so got talking. However it had happened, all the village seemed to be in the secret, and to be that morning upon the watch at door, window, gable, and street-corner. Lucy, her mother, Mrs Dunstan, and Aunt Milly, on alighting at the church-gates, were surprised, and in the case at least of Lucy, not at all displeased, to find a group of the commoner tenantry huddled there bare-headed; further on, nearer the porch, a cluster of children, hastily arranged by a few women, strewed on the path flowers, snatched from the cottage-gardens; and within the church itself, Lucy was pleased to perceive, on entering, quite a little muster of the 'gentry' of the village. She courtesied bewitchingly, as she grandly swept along the aisle, looking very superb in her bridal dress. The fair bride's mother, too, passed through the ordeal firmly and well; and if Mrs Dunstan and Aunt Milly, who were both once more uncomfortably stiff in ancient silks, were not very juvenile or very aristocratic-looking, they were pleasant, cheery matrons to meet the gaze of, and not a giggle could be heard from all the critics, though the old ladies blushed like young girls.

Sir Mark was already waiting in the vestry, having reached the church by some roundabout road, without coming through the village. With him were the reverend incumbent and Mr Bilk the lawyer, who had been surprised by a summons to attend as one of the witnesses. The baronet, on appearing in the vestry doorway, seemed staggered by the sight of the people, and for an instant he hesitated, turning his white face to every part of the building in succession. But when his eye fell on Lucy, he hurried forward with a show of more

excitement than is usual even upon such occasions. The spectators wondered at his manner; but his gaze was now confined to Lucy, unceasingly watching her every movement, as she drooped in increased beauty before him. The buzz of criticism which had marked their meeting, hushed as the couple advanced to the communion-rail, and took their places for the ceremony.

Near the chancel, a number of monuments of the Dayton family, some of them very ancient, filled up the space on the right-hand side; and there, half-concealed between the tomb of a Crusader and a group of emblematical statuary in honour of a more modern scion of the race, stood a tall woman; her face was bent down as if to hide it, but her agitation was sufficiently indicated by the way in which her ungloved fingers clutched the marble edge of the adjoining tomb, as she breathlessly listened to the proceedings. Behind her, partly crouched a young man, his white features half-concealed behind his lifted hat, but the fierce eyes and the frowning forehead were unmistakably those of Adams. His companion was Mrs Leighton.

The incumbent read the service slowly, a slight pomposity mingling with his otherwise deferential manner, as perhaps became the wedding of a titled bridegroom, who was also the patron of the living. Mr Bilk, in a somewhat blundering and embarrassed way, acted as best-man; and Sir Mark made the fatal responses hurriedly and feebly; while Lucy went through her part of the rite gracefully and with unusual self-possession. At length, the clerk shouted out a gratuitously repeated final 'Amen!' and again the hum of conversation broke from the spectators, as the party moved away towards the vestry to sign the register. Immediately there glided after them, as far as the door, the woman from beside the Crusader's tomb, her hand now pressed closely upon her mouth: was it to crush back words she felt impelled to utter? Close behind her, stooping a little, as if for disguise, went Adams. Several other spectators pushed past them into the vestry, as uninvited witnesses, but those two paused at the threshold.

'It is done!' was cried, in clear shrill tones, as the baronet dropped the pen from his shaking hand upon the vestry-table, after affixing his name. Sir Mark, haggard as death, glared round; but Adams had instantly, by sheer force, pulled his companion back, and was then pushing her towards the adjacent side-door. Those who were within sight and hearing, looked wonderingly after the couple who were acting so strangely; but the other signatures had to be written; and Lucy, her beauty heightened by the touch of excitement and surprise, was soon bending over the book, the cynosure of all else-forgetting eyes.

'If he recognises you here, you will not get into the Lodge! We must make haste, or they will reach it first,' whispered Adams, as Mrs Leighton struggled with him at the door.

'It is done!' she repeated, again startling those who stood near. But she yielded to Adams; and, as if fully adopting his hint, hurried through the churchyard.

Not many minutes later, Sir Mark appeared to be almost equally anxious to escape from the church, in his haste quite outwalking Lucy, who was elegantly hanging on his arm. The uncovered heads of a double row of cottagers and others now assembled at the porch went down very low as the

party issued forth. Sir Mark, pale as a corpse, waved his hand deprecatingly, but more flowers were strewn by the children, who were this time formally marshalled for the purpose; and as they quitted the churchyard, the three bells in the old ivied tower were hastily got into motion amid the cheers of the crowd. Sir Mark greatly surprised those with him. Trembling with excitement, he complained to the Rev. Mr Winnicomb and Mr Bilk that all this was contrary to his orders, and, at the same time, he, in a half-scared way, hurried them all into the carriages, and then ordered the drivers to take the longer road to the Lodge, thus again avoiding the village.

The entrance-gates at the Lodge were thrown open for them, and there was more cheering when the carriages whirled through the knot of persons assembled there. As they emerged from the lofty avenue, quite a crowd was to be seen at the front of the Lodge. The excitement of this suddenly hastened marriage had made the servants forget for the moment the other extraordinary occurrences, and all the household had mustered to offer greetings. The gorgeously liveried footmen formed in line, with more precision than the cottagers; and the servants, under-servants, gamekeepers, grooms, gardeners, and the rest, all huddled forward to get the first glimpse of the bride.

'Long live Lady Dayton!' was spontaneously uttered in a general shout, and suddenly a tall woman (having pushed a couple of footmen apart, and passed through their line) appeared in the open space, and courtesied as if in acknowledgment of the cheer. Mr Adams instantly struggled through to her side, and boldly bade the servants give way. First of all the rest, she passed on into the Lodge entrance-hall. Sir Mark had seen nothing of it; he was busy assisting his bride to alight, and Lucy, too, was agitated on entering the premises for the first time as their mistress. Up the grand staircase the party passed, and still a little way before them went the lady who had Adams at her side; on each landing, servants echoed the cry, 'Welcome to our Lady!' and on every occasion the stranger courtesied low. The doors of the lofty reception-room were flung wide, and there the steward, the housekeeper (our old friend Mrs Trippety), and several other of the higher officials, were in waiting with a gay bouquet to present to their new mistress.

'Welcome!' now faintly said Sir Mark with a sickly smile, disengaging his arm from that of Lucy, as the old housekeeper advanced, with the bouquet in one hand and in the other a large bunch of shining keys. Very courteously the proud beautiful girl was returning the reverence of the portly dame, when suddenly Mrs Leighton, before the baronet's word 'Welcome!' had ceased to echo, passed between Lucy and the housekeeper, quickly grasped both the bouquet and keys, and then, turning so as to face Sir Mark, 'I thank you for your welcome!' she cried in a triumphant shriek. Exclamations of surprise burst from those about her, and there was an instant rush into the doorway of those standing without and on the stairs, alarmed by the strange signal.

'Am I mad now?' she asked, craning forwards till her face almost touched that of her stricken husband, who, with fallen jaw, stared at this sudden vision of the past.

'Mrs Leighton!' gasped Lucy.

'No, no—Dayton,' she bitterly sneered, turning a quick frown on Lucy.—'Leave him! he belongs to me,' she instantly added, as Lucy went towards his side. 'Go home—go to Leicestershire, and be less vain.' With a haughty movement of dismissal, she pointed her towards the door.

'Oh, what is this?' murmured Mrs Eddowes, going to her daughter.—'Sir Mark, speak! Who is this person?'

'I will tell you—he has lost his tongue,' sneered a fresh voice, that of Adams, who was once again at Mrs Leighton's side. 'This is Lady Dayton'—pointing to her—'married many years ago in Cornwall to her husband there.—You are still Miss Eddowes only,' he added, bowing ironically to poor wondering Lucy.—'He'—boldly fronting the baronet—'is a doubly-ruined man. The Lodge is not his.—See—see how he changes in the face! He admits it! And now he has committed a crime, the penalty for which his lawyer here can tell him, for his title, though he keeps it, shall not save him.'

'Have you nothing to say?' demanded Mrs Dunstan, advancing close before the staring baronet, and slipping one arm about her sinking niece. 'Is this true?' All grew silent for his answer.

'Let me go to my chamber,' slowly fell from the blue lips of the broken man, his starting eyes, as he was turning away, still fixed upon his wife.

'You all hear it!' shrieked Mrs Leighton, as she had so long called herself. The finger she pointed at him as she spoke might have been a deadly weapon, for he fell headlong, uttering a low, scarcely audible cry.

Lucy had sunk, apparently lifeless, into the arms of Mrs Dunstan and her mother, and all was confusion.

'Fetch his doctor!' fiercely cried Mrs Leighton, rushing to where Sir Mark lay. Several of the servants raised him; and she turned about to issue fresh commands: 'Those women must go. Let them be taken in a carriage to their home.' She might always have been the mistress of the place!

'I am this lady's adviser,' added Adams, addressing the bewildered auditors. 'She is the mistress here, and must be obeyed.—If you, sir'—and he turned to the amazed lawyer, who had laid his finger on his arm—'are not convinced by his tacit admission' (pointing to Sir Mark, whom the servants were carrying out by the door), 'other proofs can be given.—You, too, reverend sir'—and he bowed, with exaggerated politeness, to Mr Winnicomb—'have a right to ask for information; but the room must be cleared of all others.—Bid them begone, my Lady!'

'Go!' she said, waving her hand; and, awed by her flashing eyes, the crowd hurriedly fell back.—'Do not hurt her,' she continued, speaking almost calmly, advancing where two or three female servants were helping Mrs Dunstan with poor unconscious Lucy.

'You have killed her!' cried Aunt Milly, quitting the drooping girl's side, and clutching at the speaker. 'How dared you! I will tear you!'

One effort shook the old lady off, just as Mrs Eddowes, who had herself partly swooned, was recovering consciousness, and beginning to raise loud cries for her daughter. Lucy, still insensible, was conveyed back down the great stairs she had so recently ascended, and the room was at once cleared by Adams of the crowd. The document

which had been produced to Mr Trevethick was then submitted to the lawyer and the clergyman; but the latter scarcely glanced at it—it was true, he said, for Sir Mark had asked his advice in the case, only representing that it was that of a friend!

‘What was it you said about the Lodge not belonging to Sir Mark?’ asked the puzzled attorney. ‘Did you mean?’—

‘Hush!’ impetuously broke in the baronet’s wife, the return of the Cornish dialect shewing that her old, uncontrollable excitement was coming back. ‘I am the mistress, and you shall not say it is not his.’ Pressing her hand for a second on her eyes, she removed it, and went on, with increasing wildness: ‘I did not ask him for my child.—Fever! I left it sleeping, with a quiet breath, and in that time to be dead!—You do not believe it; your faces say so. He will be better soon—then I will ask him for my child!’ Lifting her clasped hands towards the bright ceiling, she gazed upwards in an ecstasy. A moment afterwards, she crushed her face between her hands, which twitched and started as she moved round and round, just where she stood.

‘Where is Mr Walter Dayton?’ whispered Adams in the lawyer’s ear. ‘He should have been here to see it!’

‘Sir Mark is still my client; I must go and see him,’ said the lawyer, shaking his head.

‘Do you, sir, know where the fop is?’ Adams next inquired of Mr Winnicomb, who was intently watching the lady’s movements.

‘I do not,’ he softly answered, mechanically following the lawyer to the door.

‘Tell his high and mighty baronetship,’ sneered Adams, following them, ‘that Lady Dayton will not again quit him; she will remain here under this roof till it passes from his hands.’

‘Tell him I will see him,’ she suddenly said, dropping her hands, and fixing them with her burning eyes. ‘I will say’—She seemed to lose the power of articulation; for a second, she stood with her lips apart, and then she hastily dropped her head upon the mantel, pressing it between her hands.

The lawyer and the clergyman escaped from the room, followed by a burst of laughter from Adams. The next instant he opened the door, and called to Mr Winnicomb by name.

‘Order them to ring the church bells louder, and to keep on ringing all day. Lady Dayton wishes it!’ This was in ironical allusion to the music of the bells, which the wind brought gaily to the Lodge—the later news not having as yet reached the busy ringers in the old gray tower.

JACK ASHORE AND JACK AFLOAT.

JACK is, of course, Jack Bowline or Jack Halyard, the Jack whom we always have in our thoughts when we speak of the British sailor, the jolly tar, the odd creature who is supposed to be always blessing his stars that he is not, like a landsman, exposed to the danger of falling chimney-pots during windy weather. Jack has improved and is improving in many of his moral and social peculiarities; and yet his life is so strange, he is exposed to so much injustice when afloat, and so many temptations when ashore, that the public generally would welcome any and every amelioration in his condition. The true Jack, the seaman of the royal navy, has his wants and general circumstances frequently brought under notice in parliament;

but Jack Number Two, Jack of the merchant service, is exposed to a greater number of vicissitudes, some of which deserve more public attention than they receive. There was very recently a discussion on this subject before the Society of Arts, arising out of the reading of a paper by Captain Toynbee, in which that officer remarked that, ‘up to the present time the sympathies of the nation seem to be with the comical sailor, who drinks too much grog, dresses extraordinarily, rolls as he walks, chews tobacco, and takes a coach for himself, another for his hat, and another for his stick—not with the steady married sailor, who, on going to sea, must leave his wife and family unprotected. In fact, it would seem as if the idea that we are descended from monkeys was, in the public mind, illustrated by sailors, and that they are not yet fit to be treated as human beings.’ What with T. P. Cooke’s virtuous and romantic sailor, and the popular idea of a comical sailor, the real hard-working mariner receives less attention than is his due.

Captain Toynbee recommends a more carefully adjusted dietary for British merchant-ships, very little more expensive than that adopted in average vessels, and not really more expensive, in comparison with the ships of the best owners, but better regulated, especially where fresh provisions can possibly be obtained. He has himself found the following scale of provisions satisfactory to the men: 1 lb. bread per day; 1½ lb. salt-beef or 1½ lb. salt-pork per day, the two kinds alternately; ½ lb. flour or ½ pint peas per day, alternately; ½ oz. tea and ½ oz. coffee per day; 2 oz. sugar and 3 quarts water (an extra pint of the latter when in the Tropics) per day; 1½ oz. suet on four days in the week; 4 oz. preserved potatoes twice a week; 2 oz. raisins, 8 oz. preserved meat, ½ pint pickles, 1 oz. mustard, delivered weekly. No grog to be allowed, except as an extra; and then to consist of ½ gill rum daily at sea, or a gill when in port—to be forfeited as a punishment for misconduct. Extra coffee or cocoa is allowed at daybreak, 1 pint each man, to the hands engaged on the deck-watch, and to those engaged on board when in port. Vinegar and lime-juice are prescribed by act of parliament as compulsory accompaniments of the diet, on the score of health. According to the position in which the captain may be placed at any particular time, with a scarcity of some articles of food, and a facility of obtaining others, there may be substitutions made, with the consent of the men.

The articles of agreement between a merchant seaman and a shipowner contain, among other things, a printed dietary; and the signatures of both are put to it in presence of a shipping-master, who in some respects represents the government. If the owner and the captain both behave properly, Jack gets his allowance according to agreement; but if otherwise, he is very powerless to get matters rectified. Commander Dawson states that the dietary scale of the mercantile marine is, on paper, fully equal to that of the royal navy in quantity, but that the quality is not equally attended to. The great want is, a small proportion of fresh-meat and vegetables, to counteract the effect of the salt: if one pound per man were spent on fresh food for a voyage to Calcutta (preserved in cans, if not obtainable in any other way), more than one pound’s worth of improvement in health would result. Many of the merchant-ships leaving London and Liverpool, as well as from other ports, lay in a

stock of cheap provisions, regardless of the effect upon poor Jack. The whole supply ought, it is to be urged, to be well inspected before the ship weighs anchor; and some of the warrant-officers and able seamen ought to assist in the inspection, to see that all is fair. Unless this is done, the liability of being cheated with poor food is great, except in the case of well-trusted firms.

Let us peep a little behind the curtain, and see what really is paid for Jack's food, in comparison with the proper price necessary for insuring good quality. 'There are,' says Captain Toynbee, 'provisioners who take the smallest possible share in a very large number of ships, with the understanding that they shall have the supplying of the provisions. This is quite right in a business point of view, but the temptation to supply cheap provisions comes heavier on them than on other shipowners. . . . I went to one of our very best provisioners, and asked the price of beef that would pass inspection for troops; he answered, L.9, 5s. per tierce of 336 lbs.; which, for the ordinary tierce of 304 lbs., would be about L.8, 7s. I then asked, what is the price of beef supplied to the crews of ships? He answered, from L.5, 10s. to L.6, 10s. per tierce of 304 lbs. With regard to pork, he said it ranged from L.4, 10s. to L.5, 15s. per barrel of 200 lbs.; but he shewed me a list of prices from another English port where it ranged from L.3, 5s. to L.3, 15s.; but this is stuff that you could squeeze through your fingers like lard. He went on to say that in flour, peas, and other stores a few shillings per barrel were often saved by a close-fisted firm.—When freights are low, the provisioning is likely to be bad, because the owners pare and shave down as closely as they can. The American ships, as a rule, are understood to have more in the way of fresh provisions than the English: such as potatoes, dried apples, beans, pickles, and corn-flour. Merchant-service biscuit is not so good as navy biscuit; and the sailors in emigrant-ships are worse dieted than the emigrants.

Then, how is Jack's health taken care of, either by him or for him? Ship-surgeons declare that scurvy is rapidly reviving, owing in part to the deficiency in lime-juice, and in part to the bad quality of much that is supplied. Some of it is indeed vile stuff, bought at two shillings a gallon, doctored up, and sold to ships at a shilling a bottle. Unless good lime-juice is supplied, the salt-meat of a seaman's daily diet is almost certain to engender scurvy. The medical men declare that scurvy can be well and easily kept in check, if lime-juice be in store; and therefore it almost amounts to murder to neglect this precaution. Some unworthy owners will even put on board stuff called lime-juice which they have bought for sixpence a gallon, and which is very little else than water with a modicum of sulphuric acid in it. Scurvy is nearly unknown in French and Spanish ships; and we certainly ought to be able to equal our southern neighbours in this respect. It is quite remarkable to see how the medical men unite in opinion on this matter; Dr Leach, surgeon on board the *Dreadnought*, joins the others in saying lime-juice, lime-juice, lime-juice!

As for Jack's parlour and kitchen and bedroom, they are very queer places indeed—more so than is known to any landmen—except perhaps steerage emigrants. By act of parliament, every seaman is to have nine square feet of deck if he has a

hammock, and twelve if he has a bunk. Emigrants have fifteen, and some of the best shipowners are willing to give Jack as much. The fore-castle (the seamen's domain) of flush-decked ships has very little either of light or ventilation. 'Shipowners have a right to see' [ought to see?] 'sailors lodged at least as well as dogs and pigs; and then they may probably hope to see them more under the influence of sober reason than the recklessness of wicked instincts. . . . I have myself seen seamen's chests and beds filled with water in at the hawse-holes of topgallant fore-castles; I have also seen fore-castles and seamen's chests black with the gas which rises from cargo; it rubs off on cloth, and smells like sewage. This is especially the case in sugar-ships, which on that account are not allowed to carry soldiers. Again: I have seen a place containing two packs of fox-hounds and three horses which received half its ventilation by a hatch which opened into the sailors' fore-castle; whereas an air-tight shaft would have carried the awful smells to the upper deck.' The act, it is true, requires that the sailors' quarters should be inspected before a voyage; but the seaman himself never looks to this before he embarks, and when he is once on board, it is too late to have defects pointed out and remedied. It is not as it ought to be, but every one admits that a seaman wants more looking after than a landsman; he is so much at the mercy of others, that he serves no apprenticeship to the very useful art of self-reliance.

And now as to Jack's wife—what about her? Poor chap; he knows little about proper wives, too much about improper! The east end of London, and all the maritime ports, are running over with vice, with Jack as its victim. The best and steadiest seamen are those who are married, and who can leave their wives and children with something to help to support them during the absence of the bread-winner. There is no invincible obstacle to sailors marrying, and marrying respectably; the difficulties could all be surmounted by degrees. It is not the gift of charity that is wanted; give the thing a good start by well-considered organisation, and Jack would become a decent Benedict. As matters are at present, he is victimised directly he comes on shore. 'He cannot love the woman who dupes, drugs, robs, diseases, and leaves him minus the best part of his clothes. These wretched women die off quickly, and there are actually young girls being trained to supply their place.' Mr Greateux, chaplain to the Sailors' Home at Wellclose Square, says that where sailors do marry, it is in nearly all cases better for them. 'I have never known,' he adds, 'a sailor's wife misconducting herself, if she was a steady woman before they were married.' Such women often bear the greatest privations, in the endeavour to earn an honest living during their husbands' absence.

The Sailors' Home is Jack's lodging and boarding house during his temporary stay on shore between one voyage and another; that is, he gets such a home if he has no family, and avoids falling into ill hands. There are such places at a few of our principal ports, well managed, and fitted to improve poor Jack as a rational being—bed-place, cooking-room, smoke-pipe and news room, safe lock-and-key security, facilities for knowing what is going on in the maritime world, careful doctoring if sick, kindly advice when needed—all provided at a very moderate rate. The frightful

lodging-houses in all our ports, and the dens of infamy with which they are connected, expose Jack to evils which the other classes of society know little about. It is urged that government should give bits of land at all our busy ports, and that kindly persons should build Sailors' Homes upon them, charging rentals just sufficient to pay fair interest on the money sunk.

What with the rarity of marriage among his class, the paucity of Sailors' Homes, and occasional unfair delay in paying him his wages when a voyage is over, Jack is indeed a poor helpless chap when he lands down Wapping way. The Merchant Seamen's Act requires that sailors shall be paid part of their wages directly they arrive, and the rest within four or five days; but the more niggardly class of shipowners contrive to evade this, for the sake of a miserable bit of saving in the interest of money. Sometimes Jack does not get a penny for these four or five days; he borrows from the harpies who are always on the look-out for him, and who take care that he does not escape them until he has paid pretty smartly for the accommodation. Captain Toynbee, speaking of the evil of this unfair system upon married seamen, says: 'Last November, a sailor arrived in London after a voyage of two years; his wife was at Shields; she came to London, found him at the Sailors' Home, and had to take lodgings (for only the sailors themselves are lodged at these places). They were detained two or three weeks, waiting for his pay, before they could start off to their family at Shields, of course complaining bitterly of the expense. This woman knew the sad temptations to which her husband would be exposed, and took the wisest course.' Commander Dawson, in the same spirit, indignantly comments on the scandal that Jack should so often be forced by a concurrence of circumstances into the vices and evils of shore-life.

Of course, we don't expect Jack to do much in the way of saving money, or making a little provision for hard times; but he is not without his tendencies in this way, if kindly encouraged. As a merchant seaman, he has not much reason to admire the government under which he lives. For a hundred and four years, every merchant seaman had to pay a shilling a month to the Merchant Seamen's Fund, 'for the relief and support of maimed and disabled seamen, and the widows and children of such as shall be killed, slain, or drowned in the merchant service;' and it is an actual fact that, for eighty-seven years of this period, sixpence out of this shilling went to Greenwich Hospital, without entitling the merchant seaman to share with the seaman of the royal navy the benefits of this institution. In 1834, the government put an end to this shabby exaction; and, in 1851, the remaining sixpence per month was rendered voluntary instead of compulsory. Some of the sailors get a bit of assistance in time of trouble from this Merchant Seamen's Fund (provided they still subscribe their sixpence a month); but it is a sorry affair at best. About £7000 falls to the government every year from seamen's unclaimed wages and effects; and Captain Toynbee thinks this might very reasonably be made the nucleus of such a fund. The Board of Trade superintends the establishment of savings-banks and money-order offices especially for seamen; and Jack shews, by the extent to which he avails himself of these facilities, that he is not at

heart an improvident fellow. It is sad to think that there are three thousand of these hardy men in the workhouse: this ought not to be the case; Jack's earnings, if fairly well applied, ought at anyrate to save him from this.

Some people fear, either that future Jacks will be too few in number, or that they will deteriorate in quality. It is no longer compulsory upon ship-owners, as it used to be, to carry apprentices as part of their crews; and there is felt to be a scarcity of young lads regularly learning the trade of the sea. British ships are now manned by seamen of all countries, to an extent never before known; partly because they will serve for lower wages, and partly because the best British hands are reserved for the more responsible posts. If Captain Toynbee did not state it as a well-known fact in his profession, we could hardly believe that commanders, to curry favour with the shipowners, try sometimes to bring about the desertion of British seamen when a ship reaches Calcutta, in order that they may man the ship at a cheaper rate with coolies for the home-voyage. If desertion can be brought about, by ill-usage or any other means, all the better in the eyes of the ship-owner, as, by the rules of the service, he keeps the balance of the deserter's pay, and his clothes, if he leaves any. A coolie will work for far less than an English sailor. The strange and unnatural result of this system is, that English sailors are accumulating at Calcutta, unemployed, and exposed to all kinds of evil.—Well may Captain Toynbee say of the commanders of such ships, that 'the man who will rob his crew to serve his employer, would rob his employer to serve himself.'

We must look after Jack. He is too good a fellow to be allowed to run into neglect. What with deaths, retirements, and a steady increase in the number of ships to be manned, we want (it is calculated) ten thousand *new hands* every year for the merchant service. Good laws and good treatment are needed to maintain the full number and the right quality.

THE GOOD HOPE.

O BE not sad, as though in dreams
Heaven sparkled o'er her crystal ledges;
In morning's haze and softest beams,
The castle isled on craggy edges,
An unsubstantial vision seems
From cornlands where the mavis fledged.

O faint not—when the foe is hurled
From tower and rampart long defended,
His tents all struck, his flags unfurled,
His squadrons with the distance blended,
How sweet the full moon's golden world,
In clear blue light of eve suspended!

So sorely troubled thou hast been;
Endure to-day, endure to-morrow;
Hope spreadeth wide her shelter green;
Beneath the branch, new courage borrow,
Till rise on life's serene scene
The world that knows nor strife nor sorrow.

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